

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 H-01 SIG-01
L-03 OIC-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DPW-01 SCA-01
SCS-03 DODE-00 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06 SS-15 PM-04
TRSE-00 AID-05 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02 SY-05 /102 R

DRAFTED BY EA/VLC:JRJOHNSON/DCHARR:JY

APPROVED BY EA:RHILLER

D/HA:FSIEVERTS

H:ASWIFT

EA/P:MSMITH

EUR/WEJSMITH

IO:LSTERMER

----- 037028 /74-61

P 162258Z DEC 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION USUN NY PRIORITY

USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

JCRC BARC:BERS PT PRIORITY

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, LA, VN, CB, US

SUBJECT: REPORT OF HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MIA'S

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1. SELECT COMMITTEE DECEMBER 15 RELEASED ITS FINAL REPORT
ON AMERICANS MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. MAJOR CONCLUSIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDE:

--COMMITTEE'S BELIEF THAT NO REPEAT NO AMERICANS ARE STILL
BEING HELD ALIVE AS PRISONERS IN INDOCHINA, AND THAT DOD

SHOULD BEGIN INDIVIDUAL CASE REVIEWS AS PRESCRIBED BY LAW.

-- TOTAL ACCOUNTING BY INDOCHINESE GOVERNMENTS IS NOT POSSIBLE, BUT PARTIAL ACCOUNTING IS POSSIBLE. (REPORT CITES, FOR EXAMPLE, RETURN OF POSSIBLY 150 BODIES AS REASONABLE EXPECTATION.)

-- MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO OBTAIN ACCOUNTING IS THROUGH DIRECT GOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS WITH INDOCHINA COUNTRIES. STATE DEPARTMENT SHOULD PROMPTLY ENGAGE THESE GOVERNMENTS IN SUCH DISCUSSIONS. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD MAINTAIN POW/MIA OVERSIGHT CAPABILITY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO MONITOR SUCH TALKS.

2. IN ADDITION, COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS THAT STATE DEPARTMENT:

-- IMMEDIATELY UNDERTAKE INDIVIDUAL CASE REVIEWS OF MISSING AMERICAN CIVILIANS;

-- HAVE OUR EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE CONTINUE TO EXPLORE WAYS TO OBTAIN ACCOUNTING FROM LPDR;

-- MAKE CONTINUED EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH COMMUNICATIONS WITH CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT TO GAIN ACCOUNTING;

-- ASSURE THAT ANY NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH INDO-CHINA NATIONS BE PREDICATED ON AS COMPLETE AND ACCURATE AN ACCOUNTING FOR MISSING AMERICANS AS POSSIBLE, INCLUDING RETURN OF ALL RECOVERABLE REMAINS, EITHER PRIOR TO OR CONCURRENT WITH SUCH NORMALIZATION;
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-- ASSURE THAT ANY DISCUSSIONS BE GUIDED BY PRINCIPLES THAT VIETNAMESE HAVE HUMANITARIAN OBLIGATION TO ACCOUNT FOR MISSING REGARDLESS OF STATUS OF PARIS AGREEMENT; THAT A MECHANISM SUCH AS JOINT COMMISSION OR LIAISON OFFICE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN VIETNAM TO FACILITATE ACCOUNTING; THAT TALKS SHOULD SEEK TOTAL RATHER THAN PIECemeAL SOLUTION AND SHOULD EMPHASIZE FUTURE OF AMERICAN/INDOCHINESE RELATIONS RATHER THAN PAST;

-- CONSIDER POSSIBILITY OF HUMANITARIAN AID, BUT NO WAR REPARATIONS, IN DISCUSSIONS OF FOREIGN POLICY ASPECTS OF THIS ISSUE;

-- USE DOD EXPERTISE IN ANY TALKS;

-- RAISE ISSUE IN ALL POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL FORA IF INDOCHINESE COUNTRIES CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO PROVIDE

ACCOUNTING;

-- PERIODICALLY ASK INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO
INTERCEDE WITH INDOCHINESE GOVERNMENT FOR ACCOUNTING.

3. REPORT IS GENERALLY COMPLIMENTARY OF DEPARTMENT OF STATE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ACCOUNTING FOR POW/MIA'S, BLAMING LACK OF FULL ACCOUNTING ON "RECALCITRANCE AND INTRANSIGENCE OF INDOCHINESE COMMUNIST LEADERS."

4. FOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS SUBMITTED SEPARATE OPINIONS. CONGRESSMEN MOAKLEY AND OTTINGER CALLED FOR "A LITTLE MORE SKEPTICISM" IN ITS ASSESSMENT OF SECRET DIPLOMACY IN "PRODUCING STALEMATE IN WHICH WE NOW FIND OURSELVES." CONGRESSMEN GILMAN AND GUYER CALL FOR CONTINUATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE, DISAGREE ON RECOMMENDATION THAT CASE REVIEWS BE REINSTATED, OBJECT TO REPORT STATING A POSSIBLE FIGURE OF MIA'S WHOSE REMAINS COULD BE RECOVERED (150),
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AND CALL FOR USG TO PROVIDE SOME CONSTRUCTIVE AND POSITIVE GESTURE TO FACILITATE ACCOUNTING.

5. DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN WAS NOT ASKED ABOUT REPORT AT NOON BRIEFING DECEMBER 16. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR USE ON IF ASKED BASIS: "WE ARE NOW STUDYING THE REPORT IN DETAIL. FOR OUR PART, WE WILL CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN AN ACCOUNTING FOR MIAS. WE WILL ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE ON NEGOTIATIONS."

6. COPIES OF SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE REPORT ALREADY FORWARDED TO ALL ADDRESSEES. COPIES OF FULL TEXT WILL BE POUCHED WHEN AVAILABLE.

ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MIA, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE305388
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JRJOHNSON/DCHARR:JY
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760463-1125
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761235/aaaabel.a tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORT OF HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MIA'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
TAGS: PFOR, CASC, LA, VN, CB, US
To: VIENTIANE BANGKOK PARIS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006